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XCVIII. *Some Observations upon the Agaric, lately applied after Amputations, with regard to the determining its Species. By Mr. William Watson, F. R. S.*

Read Dec. 5,

1754.

**T**HE agaric lately applied' as a styptic after amputations, and which has been brought from France, I do not believe to be the common agaric of the oak, as has been imagined by the French surgeons. What is called the common agaric is a parasitical plant, found growing upon the oak, and upon several other trees; and is denominated by Caspar Bauhin, *Fungus in caudicibus nascens, unguis equini figurâ*; of which touchwood or spunk, and the *amadoue ordinaire* of the French, is usually prepared. I think it impossible, by any process, to prepare from the common agaric a substance perfectly similar to the French agaric, which exactly answers the description, which Breynius gives of the *Fungus coriaceus quercinus hæmatodes*, and of which we find the following \* account in the *Ephemerides naturæ curiosorum*. “ In medio quercus, “ says that author, medullæ velut subucula circum- “ volutus, inventus est: tener erat, mollis, flexilis, “ planus, nonnihil rugosus, eâ longitudine et latitudine, ut colobium ex eodem commodè conficere “ licuisset: colore pallido ad flavum nonnihil tendente; itemque substantiâ, tractatione, et figurâ

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\* An. 4, et 5. Obf. 150.

“ alutæ ex pelle caprinâ confectæ fimilior quam  
 “ ovum ovo, nisi quod crassior, materiâ minus com-  
 “ pactâ ; intus præterea passim duriuscula & rotunda  
 “ tubercula, in manus magis quam in oculos inter-  
 “ currentia occultante. Initio gustatus vis statim  
 “ quædam attractiva apparebat. Reperitur et in aliis  
 “ arboribus.” Breynius further says, that this vege-  
 table has been recommended as a most excellent re-  
 medy to stop the bleeding at the nose.

Mr. Ray, in his *Synopsis stirpium Britannicarum*, upon the authority of the late Dr. William Sherard, says, that this *Fungus coriaceus quercinus hæmatodes* is found upon putrid oaks in Ireland, where it is called oak-leather ; and that the country people there collect and preserve it to dress ulcers with. Dr. Sherard makes no doubt but that it may be found in England ; and Mr. Ray had even some sent him from the late Dr. Eales in Hertfordshire. Dr. Richardson, in Yorkshire, found it growing upon the ash ; and Dr. Dillenius further observes, that in Virginia it is used as leather, to spread plaisters upon ; and that, besides its being a soft substance, sitting easy upon the afflicted part, it has a healing property.

Thus much I thought proper to lay before the Royal Society, in order that those members of it, who correspond with the French surgeons, may make some further inquiry into the nature, as well as the preparation, if any, of this useful vegetable.

William Watson.